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Agency

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[www.epa.gov/brownfields/](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/)



United States Environmental Protection Agency

For more information on the Brownfields Program and its  
accomplishments please visit our Web site:

[www.epa.gov/brownfields/](http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/)

### Office of Brownfields Cleanup and Redevelopment

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## The Brownfields Program: Setting Change in Motion

Redeveloped Airborne and  
Special Operations Museum,  
Fayetteville, NC.



A Brownfield is  
"real property, the  
expansion,  
redevelopment, or reuse  
of which may be  
complicated by the  
presence or potential  
presence of a hazardous  
substance, pollutant, or  
contaminant."





Redeveloped East St. Anthony's Village, Minneapolis, Hennepin County, MN.

EPA's Brownfields Program is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a property, the expansion, redevelopment, or reuse of which may be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant. EPA's Brownfields Program provides financial and technical assistance for brownfields revitalization, including grants for environmental assessment, cleanup, and job training.

**The Beginnings of EPA's Brownfields Program**

Since its inception in 1995, EPA's Brownfields Initiative has grown into a proven, results-oriented program that has changed the way contaminated property is perceived, addressed, and managed. Through passage of the Brownfields Revitalization Act in 2002, effective policy was turned into law. As it did from its first days, EPA's Brownfields Program reflects a new model of environmental stewardship that protects the environment, promotes partnership, strengthens the marketplace, and sustains reuse. Initially, EPA provided small amounts of seed money to local governments that launched hundreds of two-year brownfields "pilots" — building capacity and partnerships at the local level, while developing innovative approaches to brownfields issues. In addition to these pilot projects, EPA tested several other tools during the

- Protecting the Environment**  
Addressing brownfields to ensure the health and well-being of America's people and environment.
- Promoting Partnerships**  
Collaborating and communicating are essential to facilitate brownfields cleanup and reuse.
- Strengthening the Marketplace**  
Providing financial and technical assistance to bolster the private market.
- Sustaining Reuse**  
Redeveloping brownfields to enhance a community's long-term quality of life.

early years of the Brownfields Program, including providing guidance and policy clarifications on Superfund liability, removing thousands of properties from its Superfund database, providing technical assistance and resources to enhance state and tribal voluntary cleanup programs, and promoting partnerships across the country. These trial efforts proved the value of collaboration among federal, state, and local entities to address lesser contaminated properties. When the Brownfields Revitalization Act was signed into law on January 11, 2002, EPA and its partners had clearly demonstrated that common sense approaches were the best way to help American cities handle their own economic destinies with a federal safety net to ensure environmental protection. Under the new law, the investment in EPA's Brownfields Program—less than \$700 million—had leveraged more than \$5 billion in brownfields cleanup and redevelopment funding from the private and public sectors and created approximately 25,000 new jobs, often in economically disadvantaged areas that needed them most. More than 4,300 properties had been assessed, approximately one-third of which were found to have no significant contamination, or levels so low they required no cleanup prior to the property's reuse. And every acre of reused brownfields preserved an estimated 4.5 acres of unused green space.

Ongoing development at the Standard Times Field waterfront property New Bedford, MA.



Former Post Office transformed into Consumer Energy Headquarters, Jackson County, MI.

**EPA's Brownfields Program Today**

The Brownfields Revitalization Act provides new tools for the public and private sector to promote sustainable brownfields cleanup and reuse. Brownfields grants will continue to serve as the foundation of EPA's Brownfields Program. In addition to the brownfields grants summarized below, EPA will continue to test out other possible innovations.

- **Assessment Grants** provide funding for brownfield inventories, planning, environmental assessments, and community outreach.
- **Revolving Loan Fund Grants** provide funding to capitalize loans that are used to clean up brownfields.
- **Cleanup Grants** provide direct funding for cleanup activities at certain properties with planned green space, recreation, or other nonprofit reuses.
- **Job Training Grants** provide environmental training for residents of brownfields communities.

The law also codified many of the policies that EPA has developed over the years to provide clarification about and protection from CERCLA liability for certain innocent landowners, prospective purchasers, contiguous property owners, and others who conduct contaminated property cleanups under a state's or tribe's voluntary response program.

" [The Brownfields Revitalization Act is a] sensible piece of legislation, one that emphasizes the need for environmental stewardship all across the country."  
— President George W. Bush  
January 11, 2002

"EPA's Brownfields Program has revolutionized the way people perceive and manage potentially contaminated properties."  
— *Reusing Land, Restoring Hope, A Report to Stakeholders from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency*

**A Promising Future**

The momentum generated by EPA's brownfields grants, policies, and technical assistance is leaving an enduring legacy—leveraging state, local, and private investment long after federal funds are expended. Across the country, communities once impacted by brownfields now benefit through local environmental job training programs. Environmental assessments conducted through the grant program have removed contamination and liability uncertainties from thousands of properties, resulting in billions of dollars in cleanup and redevelopment funding leveraged from the private and public sectors. EPA's Brownfields Program helps reduce hopelessness with community empowerment and economic revitalization, and enables disadvantaged neighborhoods to succeed by providing incentives and removing obstacles to strengthen the marketplace and sustain reuse. Under its Revitalization Agenda, EPA is instilling the concept of land stewardship to ensure consideration of the full, sustainable life-cycle of all properties addressed by EPA's waste programs. EPA's Brownfields Program continues to look to the future by expanding the types of sites it addresses, forming new partnerships, and undertaking new initiatives to help revitalize communities across the nation.

**Enhancing State and Tribal Capacity for Continued Success**

*EPA's Brownfields Program builds and enhances state and tribal capacity by:*

- Providing financial support for states and tribes to develop and enhance their voluntary response programs—under the new law, \$50 million has been provided to states and tribes;
- Providing protection from federal Superfund liability at properties addressed under state voluntary response programs; and
- Forming effective partnerships with state and tribal governments to bolster efforts to clean up brownfield properties under the Brownfields Revitalization Act or through Memoranda of Agreement (MOA) with individual states.